

above stated, I will merely notice that Dr. Clarke thinks that *Scarabæus sacer* was the food of the Ibis, and that his remarks seem confined to that insect. We have, however, now sufficient grounds for asserting that the Ibis fed on other insects besides the *Scarabæus sacer*, for, on examining the insects submitted to me by Sir Gardner Wilkinson, other species have been recognized. Instead, therefore, of applying the above passage to the *Scarabæus sacer*, we must consider that the Ibis fed on various beetles, and not on one particular species. My chief reason for recommending this interpretation of Dr. Clarke's remarks is to prevent an error which might otherwise become general. I have heard it asserted, in direct terms, that the Ibis in a domesticated state fed on the *Scarabæus sacer*. I do not pretend to be learned in Egyptian wisdom. I venture, however, to express an opinion, that it seems most improbable that an Egyptian priest would feed one sacred animal with another considered nearly as sacred; one, at least, in high esteem and veneration throughout the ancient Egyptian empire.

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XXVIII.—*Notice of the occurrence of Hybrid Individuals occurring in the Genus Smerinthus.* By Mr. HENRY HOUSE. In a Letter addressed to W. RADDON, Esq.

[Read 6th November, 1837.]

Durdham Down Nurseries, Sept. 29th, 1837.

SIR,

IN compliance with your's of to day, I beg to state, that the idea of an hybrid between *Smerinthus ocellatus* and *populi* originated in my mind about ten years ago, and from that time till the present I have adopted every method that my fancy could devise to bring about my experiment; at length, wearied with unsuccessful effort, I determined if I did not succeed this season I never would try again.

You know I always keep my subterraneous chrysalides in large garden pots, filled within about two inches of the brim with light sandy loam, hooped over the top with wire, and covered with gauze, leaving a space of eight or ten inches from the mould to the top of the wires. When *S. ocellatus* began coming out, (having them in one of those pots, and *S. populi* in another,) I every evening, before dusk or twilight, took out the females of *S. ocellatus*,

one or two, not more, and put them in the pot with male *Populi*, and vice versâ, and then placed the two pots close side by side in the garden or window for the night, so that the female of each species formed an attraction to its own male, while the male could only gain access to the female of the other species. By this treatment I obtained five broods of eggs of *Populi* impregnated with *Ocellatus*, and one of *Ocellatus* impregnated with *Populi*; only about thirty eggs of one of the former broods hatched, about the middle of June last. Nineteen caterpillars I reared to perfection, which went under ground in about a month or five weeks after; and in August last twelve of the moths came out perfect, the other seven are still in the chrysalis, and will, in all probability, come out in May next. The insects thus obtained are as near alike each other as any species that I am acquainted with, and are as nearly intermediate as we can conceive. The power of reproduction is completely lost, as they appear to be as near intermediate between the sexes as between the species; they evidently partake of the nature of both sexes: as proof, every insect of the genus *Smerinthus*, on touching, discharges copiously a fluid, which in the male is pure white, in the female of a yellow or ochre colour. This insect discharged, at the same motion, first the white and then the ochre fluid quite distinct, and this compound discharge was quite uniform in every specimen, which is never the case in any true species or sex. I have often indulged in fanciful ideas respecting this production, but I never conceived of such an unfinished painting as it is; this is not nature improved by art, but nature sadly defaced by art, as the beauty of both species is in a great measure lost.

I took care to provide myself with eggs of both species that should hatch at the same time as my hybrids, for the sake of comparison; in their infant state no difference was observable between them and *Populi*, very little in their second stage, still more in the third, and finally more like *Ocellatus* than *Populi*; the chrysalis was as much different from either, and yet as much resembling both, as the moth. Whether such a production has ever been obtained before or not I am totally ignorant, as I have never had the advantage of studying any work on Entomology. I have also several other varieties of similar origin in contemplation, but my leisure time is very limited; and I shall be very glad to hear that some gentleman of leisure has produced a brood between a male *Populi* and female *Ocellatus* by this day twelve-month.

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